

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN NEW YORK 03175

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PORG, SF, WA
SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: RETURN OF TWO US AIR FORCE MEN FROM
NAMIBIA

REF: JOHANNESBURG 1926 (NOTAL)

1. AS INDICATED REFTTEL, USAF CAPTAIN WAYNE WILLIAMS AND USAF
SMSGT BURGESS EVERSON, WHO FLEW WITH THE UN SURVEY MISSION
TO NAMIBIA AUGUST 5, ARE RETURNING TO THE UNITED STATES AND
SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE IN NEW YORK TODAY (AUGUST 11). BOTH
MEN, ACCOMPANIED BY USA MSGT BRUCE BRILL HAD BEEN AUTHOR-
IZED, WITH THE SPECIFIC CONCURRENCE OF UN SPECIAL REPRES-
ENTATIVE AHTISAARI, TO TRAVEL TO NAMIBIA FOR THE SPECIFIC
PURPOSE OF OBTAINING INFORMATION ON THE CAPACITIES OF AIR-
PORTS AND AIRFIELDS IN NAMIBIA IN PREPARATION FOR THE
EXPECTED US-SUPPORTED AIRLIFT OF UNTAG PERSONNEL TO NAMIBIA.

2. PRIOR TO THEIR DEPARTURE AUGUST 5, USUN WAS ASSURED BY
UN DIRECTOR OF FIELD OPERATIONS LANSKY THAT THE UN WAS
TAKING CARE OF VISA WAIVERS AND GRANTS OF DIPLOMATIC
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PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES FOR THE THREE MEN. (ALL THREE AS
WELL AS THE REST OF THE CREW OF THE USAF C-141 WHICH TRANS-
PORTED THE SURVEY MISSION TO NAMIBIA HAD ALREADY RECEIVED
A 24-HOUR VISA WAIVER.)
ON AUGUST 8 WE LEARNED FROM SGT BRILL IN NAMIBIA THAT HE
AND HIS TWO COLLEAGUES HAD NOT RECEIVED THE EXTENDED VISA
WAIVERS, AND ON CHECKING WITH THE UN WE WERE ASTONISHED TO

LEARN THAT THE UN HAD TAKEN NO ACTION AT ALL TO SECURE THE EXTENSIONS.

3. AT THAT POINT AMBASSADOR MCHENRY SOUGHT THE INFORMAL ADVICE OF THE CHARGE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN MISSION TO THE UN (EKSTEEN). (WE WERE CAREFUL TO AVOID ANY FORMAL CONTACT WITH THE SOUTH AFRICANS ON THIS MATTER AS THE US DOES NOT ACCEPT SOUTH AFRICAN ADMINISTRATION OF NAMIBIA.) EKSTEEN WAS EXTREMELY UNDERSTANDING OF THE SITUATION BUT ADVISED THAT IF THE UNITED NATIONS WERE AT THAT LATE DATE TO REQUEST FORMALLY AN EXTENSION OF THE VISA WAIVERS FOR THE THREE MEN, THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT WOULD VERY LIKELY REACT NEGATIVELY. EKSTEEN WAS ESPECIALLY CONCERNED THAT SOUTH AFRICAN IRRITATION OVER THE UN'S HANDLING OF THIS ISSUE MIGHT MAR THE OTHERWISE SMOOTH VISIT OF THE UN SURVEY MISSION. THE DECISION WAS THEREFORE MADE TO STOP THE AIR-PORT DATA-COLLECTION PROJECT AND WITHDRAW TWO OF THE THREE MEN (CAPT WILLIAMS AND SGT EVERSON). IT WAS ALSO DECIDED AGAIN ON EKSTEEN'S ADVICE, THAT THE UN MIGHT TRY TO ARRANGE INFORMALLY WITH THE SOUTH AFRICANS FOR ONE MAN (SGT BRILL) TO REMAIN IN NAMIBIA FOR THE SOLE PURPOSE OF HANDLING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE RETURN FLIGHT OF THE UN SURVEY MISSION TO THE UNITED STATES. THIS WAS SUBSEQUENTLY DONE BY AHTISAARI'S STAFF THROUGH THE ADMINISTRATOR GENERAL FOR NAMIBIA. (APPARENTLY THE ARRANGEMENT FOR ONE PERSON TO REMAIN FOR THE SOLE PURPOSE OF FACILITATING THE

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RETURN FLIGHT COULD BE MADE INFORMALLY, WHEREAS ARRANGEMENTS FOR ALL THREE TO REMAIN FOR THE PURPOSE OF GATHERING INFORMATION WOULD HAVE NECESSITATED A FORMAL REQUEST. IT WAS THAT FORMAL REQUEST WHICH EKSTEEN BELIEVE SHOULD BE AVOIDED.)

4. COMMENT: WE ARE MOST UPSET AT THE UN'S HANDLING OF THIS MATTER AND HAVE MADE OUR VIEWS KNOWN TO APPROPRIATE UN OFFICIALS. WE HAVE BEEN ASSURED THAT THIS TYPE OF CONFUSION WILL NOT HAPPEN AGAIN. UNFORTUNATELY THE DATA ON THE AIRPORTS AND AIRFIELDS WILL HAVE TO BE GATHERED AT A LATER DATE.

5. WE APPRECIATE GREATLY THE COOPERATION OF ABOVE ADDRESSEES IN AUTHORIZING AND ARRANGING THE TRAVEL OF CAPTAIN WILLIAMS, SGT EVERSON, AND SGT BRILL TO NAMIBIA. WE REGRET THAT AN AVOIDABLE BUREAUCRATIC SNAFU CAUSED THEIR ORIGINAL MISSION TO BE CANCELLED AND LOOK FORWARD TO SMOOTHER UN OPERATIONS IN THE FUTURE. END COMMENT.

WELLS

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